

[English]

Radius for Telephone Subscribers

659. SHRI DHARMABHIKSHAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to remove to restriction of 20 Kms to 25 Kms radius for Telephone subscribers to provide the facility to the metropolitan and other cities adjacent to villages; and

(b) if so, since when and the exchange centres affected by this action with the last and places of the exchanges in the States?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) and (b). No, Sir. There is no such proposal.

Policy of Exchange of Detained Militants for Abducted Persons

660 KUMARI VIMALA
VERMA:
SHRI B. DEVARAJAN:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have evolved a national policy to end exchange of detained militants for abducted persons to curb the increasing trend of kidnappings and abductions resorted to frequently by militants to secure release of their companions;

(b) if so, the broad features thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to enforce the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M.

JACOB): (a) to (c). Kidnappings by terrorist groups for ransom or securing release of arrested associates and cadres have increased recently, which is causing concern. This trend is noticeable in respect of many terrorists movements in the country. It has, therefore, been considered necessary to evolve a comprehensive strategy to deal with the problem. The matter is under examination at this stage.

12.00 hrs.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK (Bombay, North): Mr. Speaker, sir, on 22nd November a serious tragedy took place in Manor in Thane district on Bombay-Ahmedabad highway near my constituency in which seventy one Adivasis lost their lives and 55 Adivasi are struggling against death. I am raising this matter here because the Central Government is connected with this incident.

This incident took place because the necessary precautions were not taken while loading the natural gas by Bharat Petroleum. Bharat Petroleum did not care to follow the prescribed rules regarding loading of highly inflammable liquid. Secondly, the standards or norms set by the international Society for chemical and petroleum (*Interruptions*) were also not followed while loading the natural gas.

To conclude, I would like to say that it was a case of criminal negligence. The place where this accident took place is an accident prone area. The Central Government has agreed to make the highway between Bombay and Manor - a four lane highway but the same has not been implemented so far. That is why accident take place there too frequently.

Adivasis lost their lives in this accident.